

Two Meanings of Courage: Truth Reveal and Social Order in Michel Foucault's *Discourse and Truth and Parrēsia* and in *The Analects of Confucius**

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Abstract

Before the initiation of our exploration on the comparison of the notion “courage” in Michel Foucault's *Discourse and*

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Truth and Parrēsia and *The Analects of Confucius*, some preliminary clarification should be made to focus on the purpose of this paper. After the demarcation of materials on Foucault's lectures and written publications, it gives an account on methodology – the comparative philosophical approach exploited here is mainly adopted from Sze-kwang Lao's suggestion on the methodological approach to the orientation on the reconstruction of traditional values in Chinese philosophical research. (Lao, 2012, 16-18)

Firstly, Foucault started from the Greek term “*parrhesia*” (*free speech*), discussing its relation to *parrhesiast* (a speaker telling the truth). Secondly, it tries to find out some “**open elements**” for unlocking the dialogue between west and east cultures **by comparing** Foucault's concept of courage with Confucius's concept of courage. Thirdly, we may deeply explore Confucius's words in *The Analects*, especially focus on the modern interpretations such as Shude Cheng in his *Lunyu Jishi*. By exploration, we find out Cheng's interpretation and annotation to historical examples alert us Confucius' concept of courage is not just boldness, but it also should be accompanied by wisdom and other virtues. Before taking social-political action, people **should not only consider the importance of freely revealing the truth**, even not mentioned what kind of truth, in which framework and of which group,



they should also consider the **cause-effect sequence of events involving millions of people in multiple dimensions**. In the concluding remarks, it reinterprets Confucian virtues from Kantian approach and pragmatic perspective and explicates the valuable meaning of Confucian moral principles and situational appraisals to contemporary social institution and social order.

Keywords: Foucault, Confucius, parrhesia, courage, truth, open element, human nature, subjectivity, Kantian approach, pragmatics, social order

收稿日期：2019/10/03，接受日期：2020/04/30。

(Received Date: October 03, 2019; Accepted Date: April 30, 2020)



Introduction

Before the initiation of our exploration on the comparison of the notion “courage” in Michel Foucault ‘s *Discourse and Truth and Parrēsia* and *The Analects of Confucius*, some preliminary clarification should be made to help focus on the purpose of this paper. Some reasons should be given for why this latest published book *Discourse and Truth and Parrēsia* chosen to be made the comparison with *The Analects of Confucius*. Firstly, *Discourse and Truth and Parrēsia*, compiled from a lecture on Parrēsia at the University of Grenoble on May 18, 1982 and a series of lectures on “Discourse and Truth” delivered at the University of California, Berkeley during October 24 to November 30, 1983. (Foucault, 2019) The last three years before the death of Michel Foucault, especially the 1980s might be viewed as another turning point when Foucault’s hermeneutic turn to his research on subjectivity. (Yao, 2005, 38-39) His lectures delivered at the College de France during 1981-1982 mainly focused on the hermeneutics of the subject. (Foucault, 2005, 1-566) In brief, Foucault’s seeking the construction of truth could not be fulfilled, contented by **the evolution of western metaphysics and epistemology**. His transition to hermeneutic turn to the construction of subjectivity¹ impelling him to seek the **dynamic origin of**

1 The evolution of traditional philosophy turns to the “hermeneutic turn” to emphasize the theme of subjectivity is very complex. Readers may see the overall introduction in J. Luh’s



subjectivity to support the basic ground of his philosophy and the construction of truth. Those of his authentic and sincere seeking involved his research on sexuality as a **dynamic bios of subjectivity and power**. However, **in the traditional philosophical Chinese viewpoint**, because of its characteristics of outside the western cultural traditions, Foucault had touched the very important issue on **the construction of epistemological truth and the ontology of true discourse** which could not be acquired without involving **ontological origin and the issue of subjectivity**, which relates to the care of self and self-cultivation. In this sense, I would highly praise Foucault's courage and his contribution but, in other words, I'm afraid that he found **the "wrong" answer** in which his dynamic origin of **subjectivity** rooted in sexuality². I think Foucault he himself knew this pretty well since he highly emphasized on the importance of practice of self-cultivation and he had paid the price on his research. Although we all know the ways of self-cultivation in Foucault's works like writings, reflections he used to practice and feel crystalized and tranquilized in those activities, for this **six-volume-project** on the history of sexuality, we have enough reasons to infer that the combination of his research on sexuality and

"Hermeneutic Turn: From Basic Problems of Traditional Philosophy through Systemic Hermeneutics to Sino-Christianity." (Luh, 2012, 40-42)

2 The provocative adjective "wrong" used here to depict Foucault's answer not intends to provoke readers emotion or derogate his moral personality. Please allow me to perform a kind of Confucian and philosophical Daoist "parrhesia" to **"tell the truth" under Chinese philosophical framework**.



the practice led him pay the price of his life and he knew his going into the wrong research direction. In the beginning of lecture delivered on February 1, 1984, Foucault explained and apologized:

*I was not able to start my lectures as usual at the beginning of January. **I was ill, really ill...**And so I ask you to accept my apologies... (Foucault, 2011, 23)*

Combined with the beginning of lecture on February 1, Foucault uttered his last words in his last lecture at the College of France on March 28, 1984:

It is too late. So, thank you. (Foucault, 2011, 338)

The “Course Context” of *The Courage of Truth* given by Frederic Gros depicts the background and comments on Foucault’s last words like a **philosophical testament**:

*The 1984 course was the last Foucault gave at the College de France. He was very weak at the beginning of the year and did not start the lectures until February, ending them at the end of March. His last public words at the College were ‘**It is too late. So, thank you.**’ His death the following June threw a rather particular light on the lectures, with the*



obvious temptation to read into them something like a philosophical testament. The course lends itself to this moreover, since Foucault decides to situate the whole of his critical work in this return to Socrates and the very roots of philosophy. (Foucault, 2011, 343)

Let us trace a little bit back to Foucault's lectures and his publications from 1980 to 1983. As François Ewald and Alessandro Fontana in their foreword of Foucault's *Subjectivity and Truth: Lectures at The College de France (1980-1981)* mentioned: "Strictly speaking, it is not a matter of unpublished work, since this edition reproduces words **uttered publicly by Foucault. The written material Foucault used to support his lectures could be highly developed**, as this volume attests."³ (Foucault, 2017: xii), before *The Use of Pleasure: Volume 2 of The History of Sexuality* published in 1983, Foucault had already started to construct his research on the issue of sexuality through lectures delivered during 1980-1981 at The College de France "which is governed by particular rules. Professors must provide 26 hours of teaching a year (with the possibility of a maximum of half this total being given in the form of

3 According to the foreword of this series of Foucault's lectures at the College de France, François Ewald and Alessandro Fontana emphasized on this "**edition of the College de France courses was authorized by Michel Foucault's heirs**, who wanted to be able to satisfy the strong demand for their publication, in France as elsewhere, and to do this under indisputably responsible conditions." (Foucault, 2017, xii)



seminars)” (Foucault, 2017, ix) By the comparison of the **contents** of *Subjectivity and Truth: Lectures at The College de France (1980-1981)* and that of *The Use of Pleasure: Volume 2 of The History of Sexuality* published in 1983, it reveals **the coherence of Foucault’s philosophical thinking**⁴ on the issue of subjectivity as historical relationship to the truth, principles of sexual ethics through his exploration on ethical sexuality from pre-existence of Christian sexual morality in Greek-Roman cultures, mainly Stoicism, Epictetus to Christian (or modern) subjectivity. (Foucault, 2017, 1-316) As François Ewald and Alessandro Fontana described, “**Foucault approached his teaching as a researcher: explorations for a future book**” (Foucault, 2017, xii), the lectures delivered during 1980 to 1981 could be seen as **a creative origin** of *The Use of Pleasure*, the second volume of *The History of Sexuality*. Therefore, we might reasonably infer the lectures during 1983-1984 could be the next forthcoming book preying on Foucault’s mind and thus the shifting back to Greek-Rome moral issue should **not be considered a sudden shift into irrelevant theme** to Foucault’s philosophical thinking system, instead, this **enhanced the importance** of the talk

4 In a famous interview with Foucault in 1983, entitled “**On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress**”, the first question raised by the interviewer as follows: “Q: The first volume of *The History of Sexuality* was published in 1976, and none have appeared since. **Do you still think that understanding sexuality is central for understanding who are?**” Foucault replied, “**I must confess that I am much more interested in problems about techniques of the self and things like that rather than sex...sex is boring.**” (Dreyfus, 1983, 229) The coherence of Foucault’s thinking could also be seen in Yao Jen-To’s comment. (Yao, 2010, 14).



on Parrēsia at the University of Grenoble in 1982 and a series of lectures on “Discourse and Truth” delivered at the University of California, Berkeley in 1983 since it could also be viewed as a kind of **creative originality** of the next volume in his six-volume-project of *The History of Sexuality*. The haunting theme of the relation between Truth and Greek-Roman ethics as well as the early Christian morality further elaborated at the College de France in the early spring of 1984, accompanied by Foucault’s attenuated appearance, and the approaching of his final farewell.

After drawing the lines of demarcation, the credibility, originality and the importance of Foucault’s public lectures, no matter which was delivered at the University of Grenoble, the University of California, Berkeley, or at the College de France, have been used as credible sources on academic research. Moreover, the new edition edited by Henri-Paul Fruchaud and Daniele Lorenzini under the title *Discourse and Truth and Parrēsia* is **a synthesis** of the recordings of lectures at Berkeley, preserved at the IMEC (Institut Memoires de l’Edition Contemporaine and at the University of California, Berkeley, and the lecture at Grenoble was originated from a single recording preserved at IMEC. (Foucault, 2019, xi) The editors of this new edition also consult manuscripts from the Foucault archives preserved in the Bibliotheque nationale de France and Stuart Elden and Joseph Pearson, who had published the first



English version of six lectures at the University of California, Berkeley under the title *Fearless Speech* in 2001. (Foucault, 2019, xi) All of the prudent collaboration makes this latest edition authentic and credible.

In terms of **methodology**, since Foucault gives an example of *parrhesiast* by recalling how **Socrates** calls for dialogues among the citizens, institutions, and young generations, this paper by means of *comparative philosophy* tries to find out some “**open elements**” (**universal elements**) for unlocking the knot between west and east cultures by comparing Foucault’s concept of courage with Confucius’s concept of courage. Sze-Kwang Lao had given his lecture at The Chinese Hong Kong University and advocated the “open elements” and “close elements” as a pair of concepts for theoretical usage. He said:

The pair of concepts—open elements and close elements—are in general used in system theory; but here I proposed for different usage...I feel every system contains kind of more universal elements which are the open parts of the system; but a system also contains some particular social-historical context elements that are the close parts of the system. If leave its particular context, those words delineated the system no longer make sense. Certainly, I use the term “elements” borrowed from Kantian philosophy. Each theory should contain its open elements



and close elements; if we don't understand the close elements within a theory, we'll consider that theory universal that is identical with viewing that theory as an absolute truth. However, if a theory contains no universal elements, that's not a valid theory; instead, it's just a particular reaction to a particular (social-historical context). (Lao, 2007, 40)

Readers may be disappointed if they're expecting the **equivalent proportion of juxtaposition** of Foucauldian courage and Confucian courage. The purpose of this paper, on the contrary, attempts at discovering a point of departure in western philosophy to promote the discussion of Chinese philosophy in the western world. Thus, the author of this paper assumed the most of readers from the western world are quite familiar with western philosophical contexts but haven't had tasted a delicate flavor in Chinese philosophy. Really and truly, readers may not only be confined in the western world or limited in certain social status. But I have to confess that I have my own intention to communicate Chinese philosophy to the western world and expect more and more westerns, at least in the academic fields, are willing to open a new vision with their own cultural background. Therefore, the **comparative philosophical approach** used in this paper won't provide the equivalent proportion of juxtaposition of Foucauldian courage and Confucian courage; on the



contrary, my intention is to break up an overall stereotype that to make comparison is to demonstrate the equivalent in quality and in quantity. Difficulties encountered by researchers while making comparison between western cultures and eastern cultures, no matter they are Greek-Roman, Christian, Buddhism, Confucianism or Daoism. This short paper is only an attempt that I dedicate myself to making a new try to introduce Chinese philosophy to the western world through **the method of discovering “open elements”**, some kind of **“universal elements”** existing in different philosophical and cultural systems which could provide an opportunity to make **a point of departure**. In most of my experimentation of papers, in which I exploit this methodological approach to deal with different themes and contemporary issues, discovering **“open elements”** like finding out a **“pineal”**, communicating left brain and right brain, a bridge functioning and communicating and help the subject **shifting between different paradigms and making synthetic judgements**. Seeking the equivalent in different philosophical systems, cultural paradigms is almost impossible since there is **the problem of incommensurability**; instead, discovering “open elements”, a kind of foundation with universal features would help us **stably and safely** shifting between two different paradigms, or jumping among multiple cultural systems, and most important of all, finally **making the best synthetic judgements in the kairos**, which means “the choice of good moment”, “the best moment for doing something, has



always had great importance in Greek thought from an epistemological point of view, from a moral one, and from a technical one.” (Foucault, 2019, 160)

In the Section I, we briefly introduce that Foucault starts from the Greek term “*parrhesia*” (*free speech*), discussing its relation to *parrhesiast* (a speaker who tell the truth). He traces back to the ancient Greek and Rome literature discovering a *parrhesiast* is someone who possesses moral characteristics and tells the truth, especially to the institution, or to his lord, a monarch who possesses social-political power. In the Greek city-states, a *parrhesiast*’s social status should be at least a citizen, a free man. Actually, he had to be the best of those citizens and be with some particular personal characters, social and moral qualities that grant him the privilege of telling the truth. Most important of all, the social-political situation had not always supported to a *parrhesiast* to tell the truth; in fact, he had to be courageous enough to reveal the truth and run a risk to be mired in difficulties. In Foucault’s discussion, “*parrhesia*” (**free speech/ freely telling the truth**) is connected with “**courage**” which may not only in Greek city-states, or in the following monarchy, but also could live up to nowadays **democracy** in modern societies.

According to Karl Jaspers’ Axial Age Hypothesis, during the 8th to 3rd centuries BC, many saints arised in different places of the world, like Greco-Roman, China, India, and Persia. (Jaspers,



1949/1953, 1-25) Confucius with no doubts is the great prototype among Chinese saints and *The Analects of Confucius* represents compiled by his followers in the form of dialogue, which corresponds to Foucault's discussion of "*parrhesiast*" appearing in ancient Greek public dialogue. Confucius, with **great courage**, dares to risk his social-political life to tell the truth during the Spring and Autumn Period when it is the beginning of social turmoil and political disorder. Therefore, from **Chinese cultural perspective**, it's necessary for us to explore **how Confucian parrhesiast, with particular personal features and moral characters, tell us what they believe and how they perform the truth in courageous, virtuous and thorough ways.**

For the above reasons, in the Section II and Section III, we may deeply explore Confucius's words in *The Analects*, especially focus on different historical and philosophical interpretations in Cheng Shude's *Lunyu Jishi* respectively, inclusive of ancient annotations by the Tang dynasty, annotations by Zhu Xi in the Song dynasty, some of the Ching dynasty and some of modern interpretations. By analyzing those annotations, we may broaden a different vision on the **relation between Confucian courage** and Foucauldian courage, which originates from western culture, seems to **presuppose the conflict** (or in another words, to **describe the frequent occurrence**) between conscientious *parrhesiast* as a free speaker and his listeners as the objects in terms of political powers and social status. Most



important of all, by the exploration on Confucius' words and modern annotations, we may find out **the relations between three sides: speakers, truth, and listeners** (the upper classes, institutions, middle classes and the lower classes) are not necessarily becoming interwoven into great conflicts and disasters in the modern capitalized societies. For example, in *Tai Bo, The Analects of Confucius*, Confucius said, "A person fond of courage who grudges against (his) poverty will be a source of turmoil; a person who is lacking moral character (ren/ moral conscience) is overly despised by others will be a source of turmoil." (Cheng, 2011, 533-534) Cheng Shude (2011) annotated, "...this preaches gentlemen that they should know to evaluate timing and situation...if the timing is proper to act and the situation is under controlled, there is no reason to worry about the rising of turmoil. If the timing is not appropriate and the political situation is not supported to behead the villain, the villain still overly despised by gentlemen definitely causes social-political turmoil." (p. 534) The eunuchs in the Han dynasty (overly despised had caused the Disasters of Partisan Prohibitions) was a historical example... The saint's words contained the profound meanings. Cheng's interpretation and annotation to historical examples alert us Confucius' concept of courage is not just boldness but stresses on courage accompanied by wisdom. Before taking any kind of social-political action, gentlemen **should not only consider the**



importance of freely revealing the truth, even not mentioned what kind of truth, in which framework and of which group, they should also consider the **cause-effect sequence of events involving millions of people in multiple dimensions**.

Finally, the purpose of comparing western-eastern concepts of courage is to provide some possible perspectives to distance from prevailing thinking orientations that everybody has the right to reveal the truth but people do not reflect **in what framework they depict so-called “truth”**, not consider **to whom they are disseminating** their so-called truth, not ponder the **series of consequence that may deepen the gaps between different communities and incur the odium causing greater social turmoil**. In conclusion, there is something true in Foucault’s brilliant view that telling the truth to a powerful object should always be with courage and it’s not easy for common people. However, a modern Confucian *parrhesiast* may suggest a Foucauldian *parrhesiast* that **using strategical methods with instrumental reason to provoke conflicts is not the only way to reveal the truth**. In our era, conflicts are all over the world, what we need is to seek for how to synthesize those confronting positions.



I. The Meaning of Courage in Michel Foucault's Investigation on the Greek Term 'Parrhesia'

In this section, we explore the meaning of courage in Michel Foucault's *Discourse and Truth and Parrēsia*. First of all, Foucault points the **two types of "parrhesia" (free speech)**: (1) **pejorative meaning** of "parrhesia" which is similar to our ordinary "chattering" means a *speaker* may say everything/anything that one has in mind **without qualification** – "even the most **stupid or dangerous things** for the city. This pejorative meaning is also found more frequently in Christian literature where such a "bad" **parrhesia is opposed to silence** as a discipline or as the **requisite condition for the contemplation of God.**" (Foucault, 2019, xiv, 5, 41); (2) **positive meaning** of "parrhesia" means "**to tell the truth**" in **social-political contexts** rather than just "chattering" in daily life. This type of "parrhesia" is concerned with the Greco-Rome term "**parrhesiast**" which means someone who possesses **moral characteristics** and is **capable of** saying what he believes out of his **sincerity—he knows that it is true**. In this sense, Foucault touches the profoundest questions such as *how* we "gain access to the truth" (Foucault, 2019, 6, 8, 41). The ways of **getting access to the truth** are different between a parrhesiast's cognition and moral practices and the



Cartesian doubt. The former involved not only the *epistemological exploration* but also the dimension of *moral practices*; on the contrary, the latter, the origin of modern philosophy since Rene Descartes, emphasized on the epistemological dimension rather than the moral one. Both of their exploration of “truth” was relevant to “*methodology*”, but their meanings of “truth” were quite different. **For what reason** that Foucault traced back to the ancient Greek philosophy and raised the question **why** interlocutors like **Lysimachus and Melesias recognized a parrhesiast, like Socrates**, who knew the truth, conveyed *what he believed* (behind which there must be some “judgments on values” in particular with moral, practical criteria), gave the interpretation of the truth? **For what reasons Lysimachus and Melesias well knew only Socrates successfully made the coincidence between the truth he knew/ belief and his deeds/ moral actions?** Obviously, Foucault didn’t simply follow up Cartesian way but tried to find out the new way to *synthesis the analytical philosophy and critical philosophy* by the means of emphasizing on “*parrehisa*” embodied by a “*parrhesiasts*” with particular moral characteristics. He said:

It would be interesting to compare Greek parrhesia with the modern (Cartesian) conception of evidence. For since Descartes, the coincidence between belief and truth is obtained in a certain (mental) evidential experience. For



the Greeks, however, the coincidence between belief and truth does not take place in a (mental) experience, but in a verbal activity, namely, parrhesia. It appears that parrhesia, in his Greek sense, can no longer occur in our modern epistemological framework. (Foucault, 2019, 42)

In other words, the *necessary element* Foucault had found to synthesis the way analytical philosophy to explore the truth and the way critical philosophy to use **lies in “parrhesia”**, in particular, the “parrhesiast” who has subjectivity to combine his belief/ truth and deeds in harmony. Therefore, it’s necessary to investigate the characteristics of **being a positive “parrhesiast”**. (Foucault, 2019, 42)

A Greco-Roman parrhesiast possessed the following personal features: (1) **knowing the truth, conveying** the truth and a **coincidence between belief and truth**; (2) uttering with **frankness** and **sincerity**; (3) **daring to criticize** – “**parrhesia has always the function of criticism**”; (4) **running a risk and linking to danger**; (5) possessing sense of **duty** and his utterance with courage usually linked to danger. (Michel Foucault, 2019: 42-43, 45-46, 50, 53, 59, 65, 69, 92, 220) In the Greek city-states, a *parrhesiast*’s social status should be at least a citizen, a free man. Actually, he had to be the best of those citizens and be with some particular personal characters,



social and moral qualities that grant him the privilege of telling the truth. Most important of all, the **social-political situation** had not always supported to a *parrhesiast* to tell the truth; in fact, he had to be courageous enough to reveal the truth and run a risk to be mired in difficulties. In Foucault's discussion, "*parrhesia*" (**free speech/ freely telling the truth**) was connected with "**courage**" which may not be only in Greek city-states, or in the following monarchy, but also could live up to nowadays **democracy** in modern societies.

To answer the questions mentioned above such as – For what reasons Lysimachus, Melesias, Nicias, Laches well knew only Socrates successfully made the coincidence between the truth he knew/ belief and his deeds/ moral actions and for what criteria they agree Socrates is the only qualified teacher for their sons? "What are the personal qualities and what are the visible criteria that entitle Socrates to play this game, to be the *basanos* of other people's lives, and to be accepted by other people's life as a *basanos* for their own lives?" (Foucault, 2019, 142) – we need to examine some examples discussed in Foucault's lectures: (1) Socrates in *Laches* by Plato (Foucault, 2019: 133-144); (2) Pilot's *techne* (sailing) and physician's *techne* (medicine) in the text written by Philodemus (Foucault, 2019: 160-161); (3) teachers in **hierarchical** educational system in **Epicurean communities** (Foucault, 2019: 162). From the above examples we at least acquire



some concluding remarks that may help us discover the bridge shifting into the Section II to explore the depth of Chinese philosophy. In the first case, “Socrates was not well known, that he was **not one among the most eminent citizens**, and that he has **no special competence** in the field of military training, with the exception of having taken part in certain battles in which Laches played the role of the general.” (Foucault, 2019, 144) Why was Socrates recognized as **a *basanos* (touchstone)** to test others in his parrhesiastic games? Why those who **had higher social status** such as Lysimachus and Melesias, “both of them are aware that they belong to the most eminent families in Athens” agreed to “**entrust their sons to Socrates** as he is **the best teacher**” since none of them gave the definition of courage in Socrates’ parrhesiastic games? (Foucault, 2019, 134) Nicias was “a very important political leader who won several victories on the battlefield” and Laches was “a rather famous and respected general”. (Foucault, 2019, 136) **Why Nicias and Laches were willing to accept Socrates’ test?** Why did they accept Socrates as a *basanos*? “Socrates is the *basanos*, since he is the one through whom you can accurately see the relations between a *bios* and *logos*” (Foucault, 2019, 142) In the parrhesiastic game, Socrates had the **personal face-to-face relation** with Lysimachus, Melesias, Nicias, and Laches. “Nicias explains that having been examined by Socrates, one becomes **willing to take**



care of the way one will live in the future. In order to live in the best possible way, one becomes **eager to learn, and to learn not only when one is young, but throughout one's whole life.**" (Foucault, 2019: 136) That is to say, there are some **"invisible elements"/ "personal qualities"** that make people around Socrates **be willing to accept** the parrhesiastic test/ parrhesiastic game/ parrhesiastic dialogue. And also, accompanied with those invisible elements, through the parrhesiastic dialogue by which bios and logos harmoniously fused together, the **awareness, consciousness was promoted;** therefore, **the personal spiritual status, the spiritual levels of subject** were transformed, promoted and their visions were changed and expanded – That's why they **are willing to learn forever. Those invisible elements and personal qualities,** as Laches said, **relate to various virtues and any kind of wisdom.** In short, in the relation of parrhesia (truth-telling/ truth revealing) and parrhesiast, subjectivity becomes an important theme because **subjectivity could be divided into lots of "spiritual realms". The criteria of determining the hierarchical structure of spiritual realms depend on virtues and any kind of wisdom.** In the following sections of this paper, readers may read the repetition that in the western cultures and in the genealogy of western philosophy, western philosophers did touch the theme of subjectivity but there had never a kind of western thinking system dealing the theme of subjectivity in the way like Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism in



the eastern world. In Confucianism, the **spirituality of subjectivity always links to virtues**. What are those virtues coming from? What's the philosophical foundation, ontological basis of those virtues? The answer is that **those virtues are deeply rooted in human nature** – different schools of Confucianism and philosophical Daoism have their accounts for human nature but that's not the main theme we should discuss here⁵. The key point I would like to stress here is that **the themes of subjectivity, care of the self and self-cultivation, the combination of *bios* and *logos*** would not find their solutions in linking to the theme of sexuality; instead, those themes, as Foucault returned to Greek-Roman culture before his death, are mainly relevant to moral issues and various types of virtues⁶ and wisdom which have been delicately dealt with through traditional Chinese philosophical discourses and practiced by Chinese sages, disciples, elites, intellectuals, and even normal people in their every “right-now”.

5 The elaboration of human nature through Chinese philosophical systems and its modern implication could be seen in Verena Xiwen Zhang's paper. (Zhang, 2020, 9-23)

6 Richard Ruey-Chyi Hwang also made the same point of view that Foucault himself had made some clarification on his main concern is not sex but the theme of subjectivity and its relation to ethics since lots of misunderstanding sprang up after the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* published. (Hwang, 2013, 134-135) Foucault himself had expressed this view point clearly: “I have sought to study...the way a human being turns himself into a subject. For example, I have chosen the domain of sexuality – how men have learned to recognize themselves as subjects of ‘sexuality’. Thus, it is not power but the subject which is the general theme of my research.” (Foucault, 1982, 778)



Let's examine two more examples to support the above arguments and then we may finish this section. First of all, let's start from the following questions: What are the relations between pilots and their commander, between patients and a physician, and between disciples and a master? What makes pilots, patients, and disciples **be willing to obey** a command, an order, rules from their commander, advices from doctor and spiritual guidance from their master? What's the missing piece of the jigsaw in our contemporary institutional systems? As we see in the first case of Socrates in *Leches*, high **social status** and perfect professional **techniques** were not counted as the essential criteria which a parrhesia should possess; the essential criterion a parrhesia should meet is like “**Socrates is a *mousikos aner*, someone who has a kind of **ontological harmony** since **his logos and his bios exist in a certain harmonic relation.**” (Foucault, 2019: 144) So do a commander, physician, doctor, master and teacher must meet this criterion of being **a professional person with moral characteristics** which function a kind of ontological harmony and well combine one's logos and bios in a **good, harmonious way**. Only when the subject/ agent possesses this kind of ontological, good harmony can **the function of a parrhesiastic subject** be fulfilled. “*Bios*” now appears as the main element in the parrhesiastic game... On the speaker's [side], on the philosopher's side, on the Socratic side, the relation between *logos* and *bios* is a **harmonic relation**, which entitles him to exercise **the parrhesiastic****



function. And on the other side, on the interlocutor's side, the relation between *logos* and *bios* is a **problematic relation.** (Foucault, 2019, 144-145) I would call this **function of purification** has the similar end of the function of tragedy *catharsis* (purification) in spite of the fact that it didn't depend on dramatic paly but on the spiritual guidance through the parrhesiastic dialogue, interactive discourse with a moral, virtuous subject with professional knowledge.

The missing piece of jigsaw of contemporary institutionalized systems could be the abuse of instrumental reason which have overemphasized the power of instrumental techniques but neglected the communicative, moral dimensions. In the case of piloting, medicine, and education, though those professional techniques are important, **the more essential element** to master a “good and harmonious” pilot-commander relation, patient-physician relation, master-disciple relation through which certain type of **power relation** display (Foucault, 2019, 161), **lies in being a “virtuous”, “moral” subject.** For in those cases, Foucault expressed that “This *harmonia* is not only a *harmonia*, but the **good harmonia.**” Foucault **didn't express that “This [ontological] *harmonia* is a harmonia”,** like “**red is red**” in analytical philosophy; here we see beyond the descriptive language **Foucault add a normative term “good”.** That's the missing piece in our contemporary societies with moral, spiritual pathological symptoms, since as Foucault pointed out that



“...as you know, **physics, cosmology, natural laws had an ethical meaning for the Epicureans.**” (Foucault, 2019, 163)

Here we see some **hierarchical structure** of the above relations in which **power relations** function well: on the one hand, a parrhesiastic commander, physician, and master, through their command, order, and advice, have powerful influence on their interlocutors such as pilots, patients and disciples; on the other hand, those interlocutors **“are willing to accept”** their power relations. What makes the power relations possible? It must **not be “only power relations”** existing there! **Without trust**, power relations would be very fragile and easily be broken into pieces by any kind of occasional elements or any external accidental interference. What makes one trustworthy depends on one’s **moral condition and spiritual realm**. Foucault had mentioned about the term *“plesiazesthai* is **“to become member of the circle, to follow somebody, a follower of somebody.”** (Foucault, 2019, 140) What makes pilots, patients, disciples in professional relations **are voluntarily willing to “get in touch with”, “to become closer to” or “to obey, follow the instructions”** from their commander, doctors, teachers and masters mainly depends on **the moral status, spiritual realms** that a parrhesiastic commander, doctor and master possess. That is to say, behind their **willingness to get in touch with, to obey the professional instructions there are trustworthy,**



virtuous subjects exert their professional knowledge in a moral, ethical way. Even though the term “Plesiazesthai has sometimes the meaning of the sexual intercourse, which is obviously not in this meaning, but it is the fact of two people who get in contact.” (Foucault, 2019, 140) Obviously, when people listen to a beautiful piece of music, there is nothing to do with sexual intercourse. Similarly, in the *Laches* of Plato, Laches expressed his admiration for the characteristics of being a parrhesiast. In his admiration, we may perceive the criterion he made to be **a qualified parrhesiast, a “good *basanos*, this good touchstone that may be able to reveal the relations between bios and logos to someone”, are virtues and wisdom** and there is no relation to sexual attractions in a public parrhesiastic, public gatherings or group communities. Laches said:

when I hear a man discussing virtue or any kind of wisdom, one who is truly a man and worthy of his argument, I am exceedingly delighted; I take the speaker and his speech together, and observe how they sort and harmonize with each other. Such a man is exactly what I understand by ‘musical,’ – he has tuned himself with the fairest harmony, not that of a lyre or other entertaining instrument, but has made a true concord of his own life between his words and



his deeds...Such a man makes me rejoice with his utterance... (Foucault, 2019, 142-143)

The correspondence between one's saying/ what he believes as a truth and his real deeds practicing in the world is **the only criterion that makes a parrhesiast's words powerful, trustworthy and meaningful** instead of superficial, temporal, sexual attractions.

Beyond the hierarchical structure of the above relations, there is another kind of more “egalitarian” relation (though I also doubt in what sense they are equal) in Epicurean communities in which they “through ‘mutual confession’, which were displayed in “some sort of sessions, of meetings in which community members each recounted their misdeeds, their faults, their failures...” (Foucault, 2019, 164) The reason why I doubt the ‘**equal**’ status between the gatherings of communities and the function of “mutual confession” is similar to the reason I doubt the possibility of ‘mutual understanding’. If we don't reach the similar spiritual realm by binding our belief and deeds together and making them correspondent, there won't be any real ‘mutual understanding’ between the members of communities. They may find out some emotional comfort but that is not real ‘mutual understanding’ through the combination of logos and bios.

“The expression *di' allelon sozesthai*, that means ‘the salvation by one another’” (Foucault, 2019, 164) may be a beautiful concept but it needs to be guided under virtues and wisdom; how could



members of communities “save oneself by others” with similar spiritual realm, with so many problems with which their mind, and consciousness are all occupied? Although “*Sozesthai, to save oneself* – in the Epicurean vocabulary, and in the **Stoic or Cynic** vocabulary – means to **have access to a good, a beautiful, and a happy life,**” (Foucault, 2019, 164) I would like to confess, through the lens of Confucianism and philosophical Daoism, I doubt the possibility of people at the similar spiritual realm, with the similar all kinds of problems in the secular world could save each other. The concluding remark made here is that “friendship” **should be under the guidance of virtuous sage-like subject**, which in Chinese philosophical sense, is quite difficult to reach. Therefore, we had better turn back to our main theme of analyzing the parrhesiastic relations.



II. The Meaning of Courage in *The Analects of Confucius*

By comparing Foucault’s concept of courage with Confucius’s, we may find out the **“open elements”** for unlocking the knots tying up the dialogue between the east and west. In *The Analects of Confucius*, Confucius depicted *different types of courage* that have made the concept of courage so delicate that worthy of exploring. In this section we analyze the concept of courage which either directly occurs with the **Chinese word “courage”** (“yong” 「勇」) or is strongly in relation to the **context** discussed. By this approach, we may find out **a few ways** to discuss the concept of courage in the Confucian way of thinking. *First of all*, we explore the meaning of courage by investigating on the relevant concepts of “Ren” (「仁」), “Yi” (「義」), “Li” (「禮」), “Zhi” (「智」) ...etc⁷, we unfold the **interwoven relations of those moral qualities** in details and many of them are involved in historical and social-political dimensions.

7 In terms of the difficulty of delivering definition as definite as western philosophy, this paper merely focuses on the meaning of courage (yong) and its relation to other virtues dependent on contexts. Further exploration on the meaning of “Ren” and related virtues could be found in Wing-tsit Chan’s “The Evolution of the Confucian Concept Jen”. (Chan, 1955, pp. 295-319). Also see Weiming Tu’s “The Creative Tension of Jen [Ren] and Li”. In Zhong-lian Shi’s Chapter 5 – “Confucian Influence in the Modern World.” Shi introduces many of contemporary scholars and gave readers a general picture of those virtues. (Shi, 2011, Ch.5, 90-134)



According to *The Analects of Confucius*, the concept of “**courage**” (“yong” 「勇」) was quite often thought in relation to a set of **family members** like “Ren” (「仁」), “Yi” (「義」), “Li” (「禮」), “Zhi”(「智」). We may even find out some **hierarchical relations** between “courage” (“yong”「勇」) and Zhi(「智」), “courage” (“yong” 「勇」)and “Ren” (「仁」), as well as “courage” (“yong” 「勇」) and “Yi”(義)⁸. For example, Zilu inquired about being a consummate person (gentleman), one of Confucius’s answering was that a consummate person should be ‘as courageous as Bian Zhungzi’ (14.12). The courage in the performance of Bian Zhungzi had some features: (1) The **premise of Bian Zhungzi’s bravery (courage)** should be considered in detail – he had never been brave enough to annihilate all of his enemies **before the death of his mother**. He was afraid of not being able to **serve his mother with filial obedience** (filial piety/盡孝), he *dared not* to devote himself to the battles. After the death of his mother, he told his Lord the reason why he had never won the victory and promised he would win in next battles. Finally, he rushed into the opposite camp, killing over seventy soldiers, and finally sacrificed for his Lord and the people (Chou, 1998, 96); (2) The performance of Bian Zhungzi’s bravery was **not**

8 A similar viewpoint of the hierarchical relations among those virtues could be seen in Qiyong Guo’s *Confucianism and New Exploration of Modernization*. (Guo, 2015, p.59) Guo proposes that “the meaning of “Ren” has distinction at different levels. At the higher level, “Ren” could be inclusive of “Yi”, “Li”, “Zhi”, “Xin” whose virtues belong to the lower level. In our context, it means that their hierarchical relations are changeable and depend on the premises that a moral agent chooses to set up and on the situational appraisals.



an independent moral quality which was closely related to the concept of “**filial piety**”(孝) and that of “**yi**” (義/appropriateness/**proper actions/ appropriate conducts/righteousness** from different contexts). **The priority** of Bian Zhungzi’s choices **was changeable**; the death of his mother **making a clear cut** showed the change of Bian Zhungzi’s decision. Before the death of his mother, for Bian Zhuangzi, serving his mother with filial obedience was prior to being faithful to his Lord and the people. He felt **a prior obligation to his mother** as a filial son before his mother passed away; (3) Another reason why Confucius praised Bian Zhungzi with his **courage** and set him as an example for being with one of characteristics of a consummate person was **in relation to** the concept of **Zhi (wisdom/智)**. According to *Xia Shu*, Bian Zhungzi planned to spear a tiger, but Bian Shou stopped his killing. Bian Shou explained that the two tigers just finished their feast; after eating a cow, they’re still hungry and not content with just one cow. They must fight together. At that moment, Bian Zhungzi might just kill the two with one spear. Bian Zhungzi accepted his advice and finally got the double; (4) When answered to Zilu’s question, ‘Does the exemplary person (junzi 君子) give first priority to boldness?’, Confucius replied, ‘the exemplary person **gives first priority to appropriate conduct (yi 義)**. An exemplary person who is bold yet is lacking a sense of appropriateness will be unruly, while a petty person of the same cut will be a thief.’ (17.23). (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 210) Here we



may see a hierarchical structure in which proper actions are prior to courage.

Another example shows that the concept of courage in Confucian tradition is not merely a single term but in relation to other moral concepts like Ren (仁):

Zilu said, “When Duke Huan had his elder brother Prince Qiu killed, the tutor Shao Hu died with him, but Guanzhong did not. In this instance,” he added, “did Guanzhong fall short of authoritative conduct (ren 仁)?”(14.16) (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 174)

The similar question raised by Zigong:

“Was it that Guanzhong really was not authoritative (ren 仁)? When Duke Huan had his elder brother Prince Qiu killed, not only did Guanzhang not die with him, he became the prime minister for Duke Huan!” (14.17) (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 175)

Was that Guanzhong **afraid of death** in terms of expressing his loyalty to Prince Qiu? How many **insults or doubts** had Guanzhong **to endure with another kind of courage?** **On what purpose** would



Guanzhong probably think it's worthy of taking those doubts and misunderstanding? What's the priority of Guanzhong's choice in his social-political career? What's the difference between the decisions of Zhaohu and Guanzhong? We could not infer what's real intention of Guanzhong but it's obviously that Confucius has his own **criteria** to evaluate Guanzhong, Confucius explained:

“Many times did Duke Huan assemble the various feudal lords, and it was always through Guanzhong’s influence rather than a resort to arms. Such was his authoritative conduct, such was his authoritative conduct.” (14.16) (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 175)

“Guanzhong served as prime minister for Duke Huan, he enabled the duke to become leader of the various feudal lords, uniting and bringing order to the empire. Even today people still benefit from his largesse. If there were no Guanzhong, we would likely be wearing our hair loose and folding our robes to the left. Should we expect that he would have the earnestness of some country yokel, managing to strangle himself in an irrigation ditch with no one with wiser?” (14.17) (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 175-176)



In this instance, Confucius to judge Guanzhong a person with *ren* and *yi* by the criteria of **benefiting the most people** in a feudal society. **The priority of Confucius' judgment** lies not in Guanzhong's loyalty to his former load, Prince Qiu, but in his **contribution to the united empire that prevented Chinese from being invaded by barbarians and stopped many international wars that could lead many people to death.** To fulfill the authoritative conduct of goodness (*ren*) and proper actions (*yi*), it also needed another kind of **courage with endurance and solidarity.** The common people **without wisdom** could not understand Guanzhong's decision in terms of the complicated, interwoven relations of wisdom (*zhi* 智), goodness/ conscience (*ren* 仁) and courage (*yong* 勇). In other sections of *The Analects of Confucius*, Confucius's sayings not only revealed the interwoven relations to those moral qualities such as "People characterized by goodness (human conscience/ awareness) are free from anxieties; people characterized by wisdom are free from perplexities; people characterized by courage are free from dread.(仁者不憂; 知者不惑; 勇者不懼)"⁹, but also unfolded the hierarchical structure of his

9 In this passage, I don't adopt the translation by Roger T. Ames and Rosemont as the other quotations are used in this paper. The version translated, "The authoritative (*ren* 仁) are not anxious; the wise (*zhi* 知) are not in a quandary; the courageous are not timid. (14.28)" (Ames & Rosemont, 1998) However, it is not only the authoritative characterized by human goodness, conscience, human awareness, consciousness, but all of human beings in different social status could be featured by human goodness if they would like to expand it in every dimension of their daily life. I also reference to some of James Legge's sentence of patterns but not adopt his complete translation in this passage. Legge (2014) translated, "(...The way



moral thinking that “virtue” is prior to “strength” (li 力), such as “A fine steed is praised for its virtue (de 德), not for its strength. (14.33)”. (Ames & Rosemont, 1998: 179)

Secondly, the approach of investigating the concept of courage is concerned with the concept of ‘**situation**’(shi 勢). In another example ‘**Chen Huan assassinated his lord**’ (14.21), Confucius connected the concept of courage with ‘**Truth-telling**’, ‘**reasons**’ and ‘**situations**’. In this case, Confucius reported to his lord and proposed his lord should send an army to punish Chen Huan for two reasons: (1) the assassination of his lord Jian Gong, Chen Huan as a prime minister has violated the law; (2) The assassination has caused social **turmoil** inside the state Chi. Confucius thought they have taken the advantage of this *situation* so that they would probably win the victory and unified the two states. However, Confucius’s lord, the lord of state Lu kept coward silence, releasing responsibility to the three families, each of them did things in his own way. In addition, Chen Huan often returned the lands to the three families so that all of them rejected Confucius’s suggestion. Confucius himself had acted courageously in terms of prudence which is in relation to ‘truth-telling’, ‘reasons’, and ‘situations’. That is to say, to perform

of the superior man is threefold, but I am not equal to it.) Virtuous, he is free from anxieties; wise, he is free from perplexities; bold, he is free from fear.” (Book 14) The virtuous people could be with different virtues: goodness, appropriateness, politeness, wisdom, harmony...etc. If we translate “*ren zhe*” (仁者) into a virtuous person, the meaning is too broad to be pinned down precisely. Therefore, I translate this passage by myself. (Book 14)



the act of ‘courage’ should not only relate to various moral qualities but also include the ‘situation’ (16.2). In many other sections, Confucius clearly expressed how a consummate person (gentleman/*junzi*) like Chu Boyu would perform when the state functioned well in good order (with the Way) and how he hid himself from the state when the social-political situation was in disorder (without the Way) (15.7).

III. Comparison between Foucauldian Courage and Confucian Courage¹⁰

As we mentioned at the very beginning of our **introduction**, using **philosophical comparative method** to find out the “**open elements**” (universal elements) is helpful to uncover the knot between western and eastern cultures. In other words, the *necessary element* Foucault found to synthesis the way analytical philosophy to explore the truth and the way critical philosophy to use no longer occurs in **modern epistemological framework**; instead, it lies in

10 The usage of “Foucault’s” in the Section I changes into “Foucauldian” in the Section II for the reason that in the Section I, I intends to introduce and simply describe Foucault himself investigated on the meaning of the term “parrhesia” in Greek’s philosophy, which is different from the usage “Foucauldian” in the Section III, namely, after adapting this Greek term, Foucault had his new interpretation and different from the original Greek use and he formed kind of “Foucauldian” perspective of courage. Therefore, the transformation of usage implies that the author of this paper views the ethical perspective with those characteristics described in context as “Foucauldian perspective and on the other hand, another type of ethical perspective characterized in the Section III called “Confucian perspective” has the same connotation.



“parrhesia”, in particular, the “parrhesiast” who vividly presented it. Much of Foucault’s works repeated he tries to avoid the ascetic and Christian version of interpretations on “parrhesiast”. Following the orientation of Nietzsche, Foucault **eliminated the concept of God** in his philosophical system, he appealed to the Greco-Roman concept “**parrhesiast**” to insure the coincidence between belief belonging to value system and truth which generally involves three dimensions such as scientific truth, moral truth and aesthetic truth. Although possessing **the moral characteristics** such as (1) **knowing the truth, conveying the truth and a coincidence between belief and truth**; (2) uttering with **frankness and sincerity**; (3) **daring to criticize** – “**parrhesia has always the function of criticism**”; (4) **running a risk and linking to danger**; (5) possessing sense of **duty** and his utterance with courage usually linked to danger. (Foucault, 2019, 42-43, 45-46, 50, 53, 59-65, 69, 92, 220), the **criteria** of being a courageous Foucauldian “parrhesiast” seems similar to that of a Confucian courageous gentleman but they are not exactly the same. By comparison, in this case, we find out the **common ground** (Littlejohn, 2014; Wong, 2014), **the foundation of comparative philosophy, lies in human beings with moral characteristics no matter called as “parrhesiate” or “gentleman”**. **On the other hand, following the Nietzschean orientation**, Foucault never deeply investigated the **essence of human beings** in terms of



ontological dimension. Michael A. Peters (2003) made his comment on this:

For Foucault, as for Nietzsche, genealogy replaces ontology. Foucault's investigations into the modes by which human beings are made into subjects are, above all, historical investigations. For Foucault, as for Nietzsche, there are no essence of human beings and, therefore, also no possibility for universalist theories concerning the nature of human beings. (p. 208)

That is to say, **the criteria** of being a frank, sincere, and courageous “parrhesiast” **is not enough** to help human beings to answer the question: What is the importance for the **individual** and for **the society** of telling the truth, of **knowing** the truth, of **having** people who tell the truth, as well as knowing how to **recognize** them? To answer those questions, it involves the exploration on **the essence of human beings**, on **human nature** which has never been deeply, delicately investigated in western philosophy. In Chinese philosophical tradition, discussion on human nature is the main issue from the past to the present. That's the reason why we find out **the “open elements” (universal elements)—human beings with moral characteristics**—to compare two meanings of courage in the



western Foucauldian “parrhesiate” and in the eastern Confucian gentleman. **In the Section III., firstly**, we try to point out the concept of **Foucauldian courage is not as deliberate as Confucian courage** in spite of the fact that Foucault proposes five features of being a “parrhesiate” and stresses on the social relations between speaker and interlocutor and their relations to the truth revealed. **Secondly**, after the comparison with two meanings of courage, we indicate that there is **the ontological ground, human nature, as substratum** to support those virtues embodied by gentlemen. Confucius, no doubts, played an important role to embody the correspondence between how he believed, what truth he conveyed, and how he acted in his life. Let’s turn to our discussion in details.

First of all, we employ the five characteristics of Foucauldian “parrhesiast” to examine Confucius’s thoughts and make the comparison. For the instance of Ji clan who was about to attack its vassal state, Zhuanyu (16.1), there are at least two points worthy of being mentioned: (1) Confucius **condemned his disciple** Ranyou two times by replying “Ranyou! Shouldn’t you take the blame for this?” and by giving the **analogic question**: “When a **tiger** or **rhinoceros** escapes from its cage, or when a precious **tortoise shell** or piece of **jade** is destroyed in its case, **who is to blame for this?**” (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 194) As the **minister** of Ji clan, Ranyou **didn’t fulfill his duty** to take the people as a whole into



consideration; for the location of Zhuanyu lay within the border of their state, Lu, it's not necessary to attack the vassal state of Lu and the war was going to make great damage and to cause the great amount of death in both sides; (2) Confucius perceived Ranyou's neglect of his duty as a minister immediately when Ranyou and Zilu visited him. The reason why Confucius merely blamed Ranyou rather than Zilu, who had also served for the government of Ji clan, is also a point that shows Confucius knew his disciples very well. When Confucius inquired the reason why Ji clan wanted to attack Zhuanyu, two of Ranyou's replies showed that **Ranyou was neither frank nor sincere**. For the first reply of Ranyou, he tried to **cover his fault** and **shirked his duty**. By saying "Our lord wants to attack Zhuanyu, but Zilu and I are dead set against it," (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 194) Ranyou shifted his duty to his lord and tried to shuffle off Confucius' condemnation. After Confucius' second analogic condemnation, Ranyou finally gave his explanation: "Now then, Zhuanyu is heavily fortified, and is near to the Ji clan's fief, Bei. If we do not annex it today, in the course of time it is certain to become a source of concern for our descendants." (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 194) Those two of Ranyou's answers to Confucius' questions were full of paradox which shows that in this case Ranyou was not able to meet the **Foucauldian criteria of frankness** and that of **sincerity** to tell the truth to his lord and Confucius; (3) Most important of all,



both of Confucian and Foucauldian criteria stress on the social interaction between speaker, interlocutor, and people relevant to the specific situation. In Foucault's framework, he emphasizes that the speaker is always in a situation "where the speaker or confessor is in a position of inferiority with respect to the interlocutor. The parrhesiast is always less powerful than the one he or she speaks." In other words, being a Foucauldian parrhesiast should at least **satisfy the requirement—the social-political status of the speaker should be inferior to the interlocutor** nor is he or she viewed as a parrhesiast. However, the situation is much more complicated; in this case, there were at least twofold social relations between Confucian and Ranyou: one was **master-disciple relation** in which Confucius was much **more powerful** than Ranyou, and the other was **Shidafu-minister** relation in which Confucius as a Shidafu whose social-political status was **inferior to** his disciple Ranyou's. In addition, there was another **social-political relation between Confucian and the lord, Ji clan**. Although the lord, Ji clan didn't directly participate in the dialogue, Confucius successfully transmitted his value judgment to him by the conversation with his disciple. It was said that there was **no historical record** showing Ji clan had attacked his vassal state Zhuanyu so historians agree with the fact that Ji clan had never assaulted Zhuanyu. Therefore, the speaker-interlocutor relation is much more complicated than which is generally depicted by Foucault. According to Foucault, the dialogue



between master and disciple should not be viewed as “parrhesia” by a “parrhesiast”; however, considering the two-fold relation between master Confucius and disciple Ranyou, the Shidafu-minister relation between them could satisfy Foucauldian sense of “parrhesiast”. That is to say, we should not evaluate the social relations in one-fold criteria that would not uncover the complexity of the real situation and would simplify the way we evaluate the real situation and the truth. The truth in this case also contains **multiple meanings**: one is the fact that the head of Ji clan was about to attack Zhuanyu and disciple Ranyou “not only had not been able to **guide his master** in governing the state **in a right way**, but in order to **please the master**, he proposed and persuaded him to do **what was improper**.” (Chan, 1996, 69) The other belongs to value judgement by which Confucius gave his condemnation to the minister Ranyou; unlike his disciple Ranyou, Confucius dared to **risk the danger** to condemn the improper decision of the lord, Ji clan and the minister Ranyou, his **courage of telling the truth** unfolding his philosophical **value system** successfully made **the correspondence between what he believed and how he realized his social-political ideal** though in most of cases Confucius had no proper opportunity to combine them.

Secondly, there are **two more incidents** recorded in *The Analects* uncover the **complicated relation between the concept of courage and other virtues** as critical as in the other dialogues such



as Confucius' instructions to Zilu. Zilu, as the most courageous exemplary person among Confucius' disciples, had received Confucius' advice to be cautious about the courageous deeds for not just one time¹¹. For instance, Confucius asked Zilu if he had heard of the six **flaws accompany with six moral characteristics**. Zilu said he had never heard of that. **Two of six virtues** directly relate to our topic—Confucius' concept of courage: candor and boldness; the former is relevant to Foucault's concept of frankness and sincerity and the latter is about Foucaultian concept of courage. Confucius replied:

...the flaw in being fond of candor without equal regard for learning is that it leads to rudeness; the flaw in being fond of boldness without equal regard for learning is that it leads to unruliness. (17.8) (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 205)

Supposed Confucius' disciples compiled *The Analects* in kind of order, not precisely but selected in general by the timeline, we find

11 Except Yen Yuan, Zilu, the one who had been praised by Confucius for most among his disciples, was also one of Confucius' favorite disciples whose conversation with Confucius occupies almost the most numerous pages in *The Analects*. Confucius had once sighed for there was no proper opportunity to practice the Way, he said he wished Zilu to accompany him to travel around the world. Therefore, we may see how Confucius highly treasured Zilu and gave his instructions to Zilu for not being simply courageous. It seems that Confucius worried about Zilu's personal character—courage without wisdom—would become his tragic flaw which finally resulted in the death of Zilu chopped into pieces in the battle. Never mentioned how sad Confucius would be.



out the related pieces of record was edited near the 17.8. **Those two more incidents** are really crucial for our investigation on the Confucius concept of courage. **The first story** is about **Gongshan Furo** was going to rebel with the Bi stronghold; **the second one** is connected to the fact that **Bixi** was plotting to rebel against the Zhongmou stronghold. The first story is as following:

Gongshan Furo was plotting rebellion with Bi stronghold, and summoned Confucius to join him. Confucius wanted to go. Zilu was upset, and said to Confucius, “So we have nowhere to go—why on earth must we go to this man Gongshan?” The Master replied, “How could this person who is summoning me be doing so for no reason?” If there were someone who would use me, I would give him a ‘Zhou of the east’.” (17.5) (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 203)

The narration of the second story is similar to the first one. Those narrative recordings may be thought of as the related issues of investigating the concept of courage. The second one is as following:

Bixi summoned Confucius, and Confucius wanted to go.



Zilu said, “In the past I have heard you, Master, say, ‘Exemplary persons (junzi 君子)’ will have nothing to do with someone who personally behaves badly (bushan 不善)’ Bixi is plotting rebellion with the Zhongmou stronghold. How could you justify going to him?”

“You are right,” said the Master.

“It is as you say. But it is not said, ‘With the hardest, grinding will not wear it thin.’ It is not said, ‘With the whitest, dying will not turn it black.’ Am I just some kind of gourd? How can I allow myself to be strung up on the wall and not be eaten?” (17.7) (Ames & Rosemont: 1998, 205)

To sum up with those three pieces of record in *The Analects*, we may ask **what we could learn from Confucius’ courageous judgments** by which he transmitted his social-political ideal. His straightforward **candor** and bold **courage** without personal tragic flaws might avoid from getting into **social turmoil**. As Charles Wing-Hoi Chan (1996) comments on that “Confucius was very discriminative when it came to **choose the person and the time to serve**. There we shall discover that, according to the Confucian standard, certain **hidden conditions** have to be fulfilled before a gentleman can justifiably accept an offer of office.” (p.29) Zilu’s not only brave but also smart enough to



interrogate how Confucius could **say one thing and do another**¹² (Peters, 2003, 215)—to set up a high standard value but do not meet the standard, “an exemplary person (*junzi*, gentleman) has nothing to do with the person act without virtues.” (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 204) In face to the interrogation from one of his favorite disciples, Zilu, Confucius gave him and other listeners—the potential interlocutors his reasons. Confucius didn’t **presuppose** Gongshan Furai and Bixi must be completely wrong in their rebellion against their lords. During the Spring and Autumn period, the nobles with different ranks in different states quite often plotted to rebel against their lords. The **general situation** (**shi 勢**) was that “**the Way hadn’t prevailed** for a long time; those **dukes** and **marquises** quite often rebelled against the so –called ‘emperor’, only holding **nominal power** to control over tinny royal demesne centered on Luoyi; the lower-ranked nobles like **counts, earls, viscounts and barons** rebelled their lords, dukes, marquises very often. Therefore, those deeds eventually formed as **prevailing habits and fashions** so it’s not weird at all.” (Cheng, 2011, 1201) It’s hard and impossible for Confucius to choose a head of the nobles who was not **deteriorate** by **vicious deeds** like the **white silk** (symbolized as **human nature**) was dyed in **black**. Social turmoil caused by wars rapidly increased the poor and death. Confucius had to be practical

12 In comparison, Foucault highly stresses on the **ontological harmony and correspondence** between a parrhesiast’s **words** and his **deeds** as Socrates exemplified.



enough to see through the real social-political situation. The **criteria** by which Confucius evaluated if he should serve for the office lay in whether the head of high-ranking nobles could **cooperate with him, putting his social-political ideal into practice**, but not in whether the leader of the nobles was as virtuously “white” as a saint.

Furthermore, there are some **historical investigations** provide us the reason why Confucius’ judgment different from Zilu’s opinion precisely link the concept of **courage** to the concept of “**proper actions**”(yi 義/ **appropriate conduct**). As we mentioned **in the Section II**, amid the **hierarchical structure** of those concepts of virtues exists, “the exemplar person gives **first priority** to appropriate conduct (yi 義)” (17.23). (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 210-211) For “an exemplary person who is **bold yet is lacking a sense of appropriateness** will be **unruly**, while a petty person of the same cut will be a **thief**. (17.23)” (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 210-211)

Therefore, we may ask: “**What’s the appropriate conduct in those two cases? What could we learn from Confucius’ evaluation?**” To answer these questions, Di Hao in his *Sishu Kaoyi* provided us the real situation in details: the **premise** of Bixi’s rebellion against his lord, Zhao Jianzi is that **Zhao Jianzi hold his lord, the head marquis with nominal power of Jin to attack Fan Zhongxing** for whom Bixi had directly served and had responsibility



to protect his demesne Zhong Mou. Thus, it's reasonable for Bixi to rebel against Zhao Jianzi who hold the quasi-political power by sizing the head of marquis, and chose to be loyal to his lord Fan Zhongxing. Most important of all, if Zhao Jianzi had successfully assassinated Fan Zhongsing and occupied his demesne Zhong Mou, the much **more precipitous situation—the territory of Jin as a whole immediately splitting into three pieces**—would have formed. That would set an example for the nobles to imitate their vicious deeds. (Cheng, 2011, 1201) Confucius might think this vicious social-political situation endangered people much more seriously than before. Here we may perceive that **Confucius' criteria deeply rooted in the welfare of most of common people** as we mentioned in the Section II. and there's the **coherence** between Confucius' **idealistic belief** and **his personal deeds, in Foucault's words, "the ontological harmony between words and deeds."** (Peters, 2003, 215) If the rebellion would lead to the great social-political turmoil, that was not an appropriate conduct; on the contrary, if **the rebel** was willing to take Confucius' advice into consideration and to put his social-political ideal into practice, and to help most people live a better life, Confucius would assist him to create another Zhou empire of the East.



IV. Conclusion

In the Section IV., our concluding remarks indicate the **contribution** of this paper. Now let us discuss the concept of Confucian courage in details so that we may prove Foucauldian “*parrhesiast*” with courage seems to be **an insufficient, a new device** in western culture to find way out of modern cultural crisis—in Max Weber’s terms, the **loss of value and meaning**—and to synthesize the analytical philosophy and critical philosophy; however, in comparison with Confucian concept of courage, it’s **not deliberate enough** to fulfill its task.

In conclusion, by exploring the concept of courage in east and west and comparing them in different angles, it leads us to think about **the deeper question on human nature**. In Foucault’s viewpoint, there is no such a thing called human nature; it’s only constructed by posteriori cultivation in terms of social, political, economic contexts...etc. Therefore, according to Foucault, there’s no need and it’s impossible to structure **the ontology of human nature** because it’s not a priori but posteriori. However, it’s the critical issue to discuss the ontological viewpoints of human nature in Chinese philosophy, particularly in Confucianism where we may find out at least three main orientations to depict human nature: (1) human nature is rooted in goodness; (2) human nature is inclined to



be evil; (3) human nature is the mixture of goodness and evil. (Lai, 1995, 307-330)

In western culture, human nature had never been explored in the way as it has been in Chinese philosophical tradition. Confucius, as we mentioned above, is the one who broaden and deepen the human nature through the embodiment of the moral characteristics and fulfill his ideal by devoting himself to education. After experiencing the political dilemma, Confucius had sighed, “**Does *tian* speak?** And yet **four seasons change** and the myriad things are born and grow within it. Does *tian* speak? (17.19)” (Ames & Rosemont, 1998, 208-210)

The repletion of the verse “*Does tian speak?*” implies Confucius’ emotions and it may be connected to the political difficulty he had encountered during about 15 years. According to Lai Huiling, this is almost the only one dialogue in which Confucius uttered in the **Daoist naturalistic voice**. For in his whole life, Confucius had devoted himself to obtaining the proper opportunities to serve the government in order to improve most of people’s lives but he quite often failed in his political career. It seems that he reflected on himself about the reason **why he made so much effort** on his political career to fulfill the duty of being the noble. *Tian* never speaks anything! Lai indicates that **the premise of uttering like a**



Daoist lies in doing all of his best to realize his political or pedagogic ideal **by practicing moral virtues**, so that finally, he could be sure of his destiny assigned by *tian*. Before doing all of possibilities, knowing one's destiny assigned by *tian* is impossible. In terms of Lai's interpretation, Confucius is such a "**humanist**" whose philosophical thinking lies in the "**humanism based on human beings**", in particular, "**humanism based on human nature**", should correspond to his deeds, he could understand the **Daoist naturalistic perspective** on human nature very well.¹³

In this short paper, it's impossible to reveal the whole philosophical systems of Chinese philosophy to explore different perspectives on human nature. The purpose of this section intends to point out the ground of two meanings of courage lies in the ontology of human nature which had never been deeply investigated in western culture but have already been discussed for thousands of years in traditional Chinese philosophy. In the western culture, just like Foucault who makes so much effort to exclude the influence of Christianity and eliminates the concept of God in his philosophical system, it only partially explains the great influence of Christianity. Because the western culture is basically grounded in "humanism

13 The elaboration of Daoist humanism and Confucian humanism in details could be seen in Verna Xiwen Zhang's paper under the title of "Chinese Philosophical Viewpoints on the Natural and Humanistic Conditions of Artistic Achievement in the Italian Renaissance and Its Contemporary Implication." (Zhang, 2020, 9-23)



based on God” in Lai’s term, the focus of exploration may be much more stressing on God, the relation of God and human beings rather than “human nature” which has been viewed as the **essence** of human beings distinct from animals instead of just various types of characteristics of human beings discussed in different fields of the western world. By comparison with two meanings of Foucauldian and Confucian courage, we find out the “**open element**”—**human nature** to make **convergence** between western culture and eastern one such as traditional Chinese culture by which westerners may absorb different nutrition to **cultivate the self** and the **modern society**. “**We have to inquire: In respect of traditional wisdom, can it function well?... Whether Chinese culture possesses prospect or not, it depends on if it can function well at the present...**The more functions Chinese culture runs well, the more prospect it possesses.” (Lao, 2007, 40) That is to say, **Can traditional wisdom mainly referring to Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist wisdom well function to *guide* modern people’s life?** This question relates to a classic issue of **gap between theory and practice**.

Some scholars challenge that if some particular cases alone can demonstrate **the necessary relation between Confucian wisdom and the stability of moral acts**. The author of this paper using this method of exemplifying Confucian moral characteristics with



ostensive historical examples has two main purposes: (1) An individual case is not only a particular case but as an example for unfolding some moral principles undergounded in it. Jean-Paul Sartre's famous example of the youth who is scourged by his conscience and torn between caring for his mother and joining the Free French Resistance is a case in comparison with our case. (Sartre, 2016, 406) I'll discuss this at the later stage of concluding remark. (2) In consideration with **the older views of examples in ethics**, the use of trivial and general examples hasn't effectively demonstrated moral principles teachers would like to focus on nor provided helpful ground for students to process reflective thinking at educational level. Then we encounter the problem of choosing "**good examples**" in order to reveal moral principles in our exploration. For example, in *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Kant uses a traditional ostensive example of Jesus Christ, "where Christ is construed as the archetype (*Urbild*) of moral perfection." (O'Neill, 1995, 168) Then from those ostensive examples of general archetype, Onora O'Neill comments on:

"They are indeed highly schematic examples. However, no addition of detail could make them fully determinate, and if they were cluttered with detail they would lose their pedagogic usefulness. Good illustrations need to be clear and simplified, even caricatures, if they are to get their



point across. They need not, however, be trivial in the other sense. Good examples need not draw on life's minor dilemmas, and Kant's examples generally do not; on the other hand it may not matter if they are examples of minor dilemmas, provided that they are appropriate illustrations of principle ..." (O'Neill, 1995, 168)

In short, adopting an individual case as an approach is to correspond to the purpose of illustrating moral principles.

In respect of how to guarantee **the necessity between Confucian wisdom and the stability of moral acts**, my answer would follow **Kantian approach** –**Before doing moral practice (moral acts)**, we need to do **moral judgment**; **before** passing moral judgment, and if we do not hope its source springs from flipping a coin or quick cheap answers from others, we need a lot of **reflective thinking** in which **multiple examples**, such as **hypothetical** or **ostensive** examples, **Wittgensteinian literary** examples, **presumable** examples or **historical** examples, would **provide us good source as long as they're appropriate to demonstrate important principles**. For Kant has proclaimed:

“Judgment will be the faculty of subsuming under rules; that is, of distinguishing whether something does or does



*not stand under a given rule...General logic contains, and can contain no rules for judgment...If it sought to give general instructions how we are to subsume under these rules, that is, to distinguish whether something does or does not come under them, that could only be by means of another rule. This in turn, for the every reason that it is a rule, again demands guidance from judgment...**judgment is a peculiar talent which can be practiced only, and cannot be taught.***
(CPR, A132/B173)

In Kant's usage, "**judgment**" as if "**mother wit**" ([*Mutterwitz*]) which cannot be learned by algorithms nor by formal instruction. The only way of "sharpening of the judgment" is by the use of examples. The term of **innate "mother wit"** used to explain **judgment, which also implied that judgment is not only a kind of intellectual activity processed in brain but also combine the activity from our conscience, innate goodness, and heart,** could be applied to answer the crack between Confucian wisdom and the stability of virtuous deeds, moral acts. Therefore, Kant claims that "**its lack no school can make good**" (CPR, A 133, B172) but **before doing judgment, we still have to reflect on every possible situation through deliberately discerning hypothetical and ostensive examples with our critical reason.** O'Neill gives her insight to summarize the relation between judgment and examples:



“The primary use of hypothetical and ostensive examples is then educational. By considering examples we become better able to judge cases requiring decision and action. Kant summarizes the point in a much-quoted metaphor whose sense has, perhaps, become obscure in the usual translation: “examples are thus the go-cart [Gangelwagen—a child’s “walker”, formerly known as a go-cart] of judgment.” (O’Neill, 1995, 168)

This relates to the third purpose of this paper: **the gap between theory and practice** in our discussion mainly relevant to moral level rather than scientific epistemological level. In fact, in Chinese philosophy, traditional Chinese thinkers’ concern mainly focus on moral judgment which had been exemplified with dialogue between masters and disciples in *The Analects* and many of its annotations in Chinese history¹⁴. Scholars such as the first and second generation of

14 The distinction between Western epistemology and Chinese epistemology is well distinguished and explained by Huai Wang as follows: “From the perspective of history of thought, in Zhuangzi’s thought, Philosophy of Life is the main content and contribution; however, epistemology is Zhuang’s unique achievement and contribution on his thought. Here so-called ‘epistemology’ is not completely the same with western ‘epistemology’. It’s needed to be further explained: epistemology in western philosophy generally discusses the problem of ‘knowledge’; therefore, in western philosophy ‘epistemology’ is also called ‘theory of knowledge’. And all kinds of problems of knowledge, essentially, could not tear loose from the **ability ‘to distinguish right from wrong’**. Also, in Zhuangzi’s philosophy, his ‘epistemology’ mainly deals with the problems of making judgements on ‘right and wrong’. However, the difference between western philosophy and Zhuangzi’s philosophy lies in: Zhuangzi’s ‘epistemology’, dealing with the problems of making judgements on right and wrong, necessarily relates to the actual problems and concrete examples in realistic ‘life’. In other words, the problems of ‘right and wrong’ discussed by Zhuangzi mostly belong to relations between human and events, between human and things or



Neo-Confucianism had already themselves to reconstruct Confucianism by means of convergence with different approaches of western philosophy at ontological level. The foundation for reconstruction and modernization of Confucianism had already been made and sufficiently discussed. On the other hand, this paper aims to raise the questions at middle-theoretical level to reveal how Chinese saint and Confucian exemplary men with moral concerns do their moral judgment under the guidance of “human goodness”/ conscience. **The usage of term “goodness”/ “conscience” is too broad to illustrate and appraise the *situation* with great sensitivity, deliberation and moral delicacy.** Multiple types of **ostensive historical examples** can make this insufficiency; by **reflecting on those examples of appraising situations** we promote the power of faculty of moral judgment. However, **that doesn’t mean the arrangement/disposition of similar situations are determinate after the appraisal of situation is completed.** The final moral judgment by different agents with their own subjectivity remains open. (O’Neill, 1995, 184-185) “...appraisals can lead to

thoroughly problems of distinguishing right from wrong in human relations; however, ‘epistemology’ in western philosophy is based on analysis of main activity of ‘knowing’, from which philosophers discuss, categories of forming objective ‘knowledge’ (formal conditions), functions, effects and its limitation. Therefore, although both of Zhuangzi’s ‘epistemology’ and western ‘epistemology’ deal the same ‘problem’ (of distinguishing right from wrong)”, two kinds of ‘epistemology’ are totally different, no matter in terms of ‘attitude’ and ‘purpose’ of dealing with the problem, or in terms of ‘contents’ and ‘dispositions’ of the problem.” (pp. 17-18) The insightful perspective that Wang proclaimed the character of Zhuangzi’s philosophy is also applicable to Confucianism and philosophical Daoism.



decisions only when conjoined with principles. In actual cases of action **we cannot elide either appraisals or the application of principles.**” (O’Neill, 1995, 185) Then here comes the problem of rival appraisals –in the later discussion of Sartre’s the youth’s moral dilemma we will show **the problem of rival appraisals is reduced** which also appears in many of Wittgensteinian examples. (O’Neill, 1995, 181-182) The aim of this paper is to elucidate **how a moral agent with human goodness/conscience makes moral judgment by means of conjoining appraisals of situations with the application of moral principles.** Different examples with multiple views of points chosen by a moral agent can reveal the problem of **rival appraisals.** However, “Even if we are convinced that we have grasped and justified the **major premises required in moral deliberation (certain moral principles),** we will not develop a practical ethics if we fail to formulate **minor premises** appropriate to the situation we actually faced” (O’Neill, 1995, 182)

The possible contribution in this paper may help us to discern the prevailing fashion in democratic society that “truth-telling” means to be courageous enough to speak freely without considering to whom we speak, for what we intend to reveal the so-called “truth” in a single, confined framework, by what means we challenge the social-political power, and with what functional consequence relevant to broader perspectives and multiple dimensions. In the



introduction of this paper, we quote Confucius' saying, "A person who is fond of courage who grudges against (his) poverty will be a source of turmoil; a person who is lacking moral character (*ren*/moral conscience) is overly despised by others will be a source of turmoil." (Cheng, 2011, 533-534) In Cheng Shude's commentary (2011), "...this preaches gentlemen that they should know to evaluate timing and situation...if the timing is proper to act and the situation is under control, there is no reason to worry about the rising of turmoil. If the timing is not appropriate and the political situation is not supported to behead the villain, the villain still overly despised by gentlemen definitely causes social-political turmoil." (p. 534) In short, an exemplary man (*junzi*), either in the position of being a speaker or a listener, he/she has to consider the issue in respect of moral deliberation (moral principles) with various situational appraisals to make moral judgments even though the issue seems to be keen to put some distance between truth-telling and moral judgments. Indeed, even within the scientific framework, scientists and scholars from scientific history and different disciplines of social science have contended for the issue of paradigm shift not less in humanities¹⁵. Particularly traditional Chinese philosophy used to ponder almost all of issues through the lenses of moral judgments. Therefore, when considering the issue of truth-telling, truth-revealing,

¹⁵ In respect of further exploration on the issue of paradigm shift please see Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*.



and its relation to courage, a moral agent of Confucian perspective of courage may not consider freely reveling “truth” alone; instead, he/she may deliberately think of appraisals of situations with multiple moral principles to arrange the priority of moral principles and do their moral judgments before taking their actions. The historical ostensive examples mentioned in the previous sections especially stress on those moral agents with official social-political status, either scholar-officials or nobles as political leaders, who cannot be exempt from social-political duties since their decisions would be expanded by causal effects and involve lives and wealth of millions of people. Furthermore, in the **pragmatic turn** of linguistic field, to know the meaning of a word such as “courage” in our examples is quite different from using the semantic framework. As J. L. Evans’ saying (1953), **“The meaning of a word is simply the rules with govern its use, and to ask for its meaning is to ask for the rules.”** (p.8) Similarly, “...to know what an expression means is **to know how it may or may not be employed...**” (Gilbert Ryle, 1957, p. 255) P.F. Strawson (1950) in his “On Referring” also proposed:

“To give the meaning of an expression...is to give general directions for its use to refer to or to mention particular objects or persons; to give the meaning of a



*sentence is to give **general directions for its use in making true or false assertions.***” (p. 327)

All of them proposed that to know a meaning of a word is relevant to knowing how to use it by guiding rules. Strawson further related those rules guiding general directions/orientations to making true or false assertions. G. J. Warnock kept on deepening the claim of “knowing how to use a word” with of “knowing **in what circumstances its use is correct or incorrect**” (G. J. Warnock, 1951, 318) The tension between meaning and use at **epistemological level** is debatable; here I borrow this tension to explain the meaning and use at **ethical level** to support the above analysis of the comparison between Foucauldian meaning of courage and Confucian meaning of courage. As William Theodore de Bary pointed out that Confucianism attempts to **identify the individuality or the position of self on the foundation of interaction with others**, namely, the **networks of social relations** by means of **moral deliberation and moral actions.** (Theodore de Bary, 1970, Intro & pp.1-28) Hence when Confucianism intends to know the meaning of courage and its relations to truth-reveling, it will raise many questions such as “in what circumstances its use is correct or incorrect, moral or immoral?”, “in which networks of social relations and by what framework one depicts the truth?” “With what kind of premises one



appraises situations and decides the priority of moral principles to make moral judgments?”

In all fairness, people in the period of peace and prosperity take it for granted that demanding future prosperity on economic growth and stability of wealthy and healthy life is basic and necessary; however, we hope to point out that constructing the period of peace and prosperity should not be taken for granted for the fact that it needs to fulfill **lots of conditions in multiple dimensions**, natural and humanist, economic and political, social and international, **ethical** and **juridical**...etc. This paper serves only an attempt at finding out open elements between western and Chinese philosophy to make tiny contribution on the pathological problems in modern societies. It certainly cannot guarantee that throughout the exploration of one sort of moral character, courage, and its relation to the problem-centered issue of truth-telling, the necessity between this exploration and social order or political stability would be set up. Instead, the aim of this trying mainly lies in unfolding that when well-functioned democratic institution has been already constructed, people should promote the faculty of moral judgment instead of staying at the stage of passing judgment by instinct or by rational selections but neglecting deliberately examine premises people accepted in advance. Borrowing the analogy from Huiling Lai and made a little bit revision, the author of this paper likens democratic



institution or any kind of well-functioned political structure to computer hardware and the faculty of moral judgments to drivers that controls the sending of information between an institutionalized society and many institutions attached to it. Traditional philosophical wisdom in Chinese culture is likened to various brands of software such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, in which a lot of prominent pieces of software could be creamed off in order to be reasserted in modernized or post-modernized societies. If easterners have been eagerly embraced the western technological inventions, the creation of computer, AI equipment and so on, why should westerners hesitate to extract essential elements of Chinese wisdom from Chinese philosophy, mainly traditional Confucianism, philosophical Daoism and Buddhism? Why should modern easterners and Chinese resist accepting and restoring our faith in goodness of human nature by rehabilitation of traditional wisdom of Chinese philosophy? The moral perspective to be self-demanding and to pass moral judgments is only the tip of iceberg; however, this dimension of moral appraisals is not dispensable but crucial to the moral life of ourselves and our next generations – it's similar to the icebergs in the Artic and the Antarctic as well as the gradual recession of glaciers. The speeding of their disappearance and recession are beyond scientists expectation.



If more and more people can extract philosophical wisdom from traditional Chinese philosophy by which people can renew their moral judgments with revisable perspectives and enrich other types of perspectives, it makes helpful to break up a natural tendency for dichotomy and conflict from the instincts of animal bloodline. Nowadays political situations in Taiwan or through the world are tendency to evaluate political-economic situations from perspective of dichotomy and to cause irreversible conflict and great damage. One of the aims which this paper attempts to achieve is to propose that people are capable of jumping out of the Para-political framework or any kind of old views of point to ponder different sorts of issues and can make moral judgments in black and white, through right and wrong.

Some issues relevant to social-political like historical, ostensive examples in this paper, Confucius and other exemplary/consummate men, have their own premises to make moral judgments in black and white. In Confucius' examples, the priority of premises chosen by Confucius was mainly to consider the welfare of the most amount of people as a whole and to consider which principality of Zhou dynasty was worthy of tutelage dependent on which noble family in authority would take the matter of cultural inheritance from East Zhou. Political authority is merely impermanent, but cultural inheritance and philosophical wisdom reach the permanent issues of



life and death, value and meaning which should not be mixed up with briefly change of political authority. In particular, being scholar-officials and intellectuals with conscience and wisdom should be capable to transcend the perspective of dichotomy and to break up the Para-political conflict to evaluate truth-telling with moral principles and situational appraisals in black and white.

For example, Taiwanese nowadays still use chopsticks since three thousand years ago from China. The cultural history of chopsticks shows the prevailing influence of Chinese culture from China to other Asian areas, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan...etc¹⁶. People cannot deny Taiwanese culture have been influenced by traditional Chinese culture for thousand years. Another example of elucidating that the main source of Taiwanese culture is deeply rooted in Chinese culture is proved by Xinian Fu (2018), one of the most prominent contemporary architects, connoisseur of traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy whose research on the characteristics of the capital of Northern Song Bianliang proposes as follows:

“It’s [The capital of Northern Song Bianliang] the first capital constructed with open structure of alleys and lanes. Since the period of middle Tang dynasty, it had sprang up

16 See (Wang, 2015, Intro, Ch.1 & Ch. 4)



from some business cities in the area of Yangtze-Huaihe area [Jiang-Huai area along the Yangtze River and the Huai River] and Yangzhou city that a growing trend towards breaking up the dusk-to-dawn curfew. At the early establishment of Northern Song, government in authority in the capital Bianliang had abolished the prohibition against running night market before midnight – that made us know the first appearance of night market. (p. 111)

That is to say, nowadays famous Taiwanese night market has its original source from Chinese cultural history of night market. The issue of Taiwan's cultural root is mainly based on Chinese cultures is a cultural issue which should not be guided by Para-politicalized framework to describe the truth. Some scholars had raised a question to me at an evening feast for international conference: "It's said that Taiwanese ancestors mainly coming from some of primitive tribes in the Pacific islands, how do you think about it? Is that true?" My answer is based on the proof of archeology and non-violation of the basic principle that cultural truth should not be twisted by Para-politicalized description. Ping-ti Ho, outstanding Cambridge archeologist, had recognized the contribution made by the team cooperated with Yale University and Kwang-chih Chang,



anthropologist and archeologist of Yale University, member of Academia Sinica, Taiwan, R.O.C., Ho (1969) depicted as follows:

*“Up to the present the only relatively firm dating with which to estimate the chronologies of China’s major Neolithic cultures is the one about the beginnings of the so-called Taiwan Lungshanoid culture, provided by the Yale University expedition to Taiwan in 1964-1965. **Based on a series of carbon-14 tests and other materials, the Yale report suggests 2500 B.C. as the date for the emergence of the Taiwan Lungshanoid culture, which is unmistakably a derivative of and hence considerably later than mainland Lungshanoid cultures.**” (p.3)*

In terms of the above cases, to sum up, only throughout resistance against the Para-politicalized perspectives and frameworks can the freedom and open environment of academic research and multiple sorts of issues free from political coercion be guaranteed. Only by the permanent opening the visions at different levels can the possibility of communication between heterogeneous cultures can be guaranteed, because the permanent opening infusion of multiple visions allows the revisability of judgments on the basis of universality by rationally choosing the priority of different principles and also it permits the particularity at different facets which should



be appraised in various situations –the tension between universality and particularity will be flexibly adjusted by moral agent if he/she is willing to demonstrate and expand moral awareness/conscience in networks of human relations.



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兩類勇氣的意義：傅科《言說、真相與說者》 和《論語》中之真相揭露與社會秩序¹⁷

摘要

在開始探討傅科《言說、真相與說者》與《論語》之比較前，首先進行前行澄清的工作。於劃分界清傅科的講辭與成書之後，本文進而採用比較哲學之進路進行全文探究，此進路主要改編自勞思光先生對於研究中國哲學以及重構傳統哲學價值之取向上的建議。

首先，介紹傅科由希臘術語「派瑞希亞」（自由言說）開始，討論其特點與說真話者之間的關係。其次，本文試圖找出某些「開放成素」，藉由比較傅科與孔子談勇的概念，展開東西方之對話。接著，採用諸如程樹德等人對《論語》及其相關歷史事例進行之現代詮釋，說明勇氣還應配合其他德性才能發揮真正的價值意義。在採取社會、政治行動之前，人們應不只思考自由揭露真相之重

¹⁷ 本文內容約有二分之一篇幅改寫自 2016 年於香港九龍國際學術研討會 Hong Kong International Conference on Education, Psychology and Society 上發表之論文“Two Meanings of Courage Related to Truth Reveal and Social Order in Michel Foucault’s *Fearless Speech* and in *Analects of Confucius*”。



要性，甚至於揭露真相時，人們不提及何樣的真相，於何種類型的框架中考慮並描繪真相，屬於哪一類行群體所認知的真相？人們亦應從不同層面的視域考慮攸關數百萬人民的因果效應。總結，從康德主義進路以及語用學角度重詮儒家式的道德原則及情勢裁奪對當代社會制度與社會秩序之價值意義。

關鍵字：傅科、孔子、說真話、勇氣、真相、開放成素、人性、主體性、康德主義、語用學、社會秩序

